

INVITATION FOR NOMINATIONS
The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA)
Partnering Award for Worker Health and Safety
TO BE PRESENTED AT
NORA SYMPOSIUM 2008: PUBLIC MARKET FOR IDEAS AND PARTNERSHIPS
JULY 29, 2008

The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORATM) Liaison Committee in cooperation with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH/CDC) invites nominations for ***The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Partnering Award for Worker Health and Safety*** to be presented at the sixth biannual NORA Symposium to be held in Denver, CO, on July 29, 2008. This award honors exemplary teamwork, innovative thinking, and strong science in the interest of worker health and safety. It was created to recognize those organizations participating in NORA-related collaborative research partnerships that result in the development of new equipment, practices, products, procedures, or policies that reduce hazardous exposures and/or adverse outcomes in order to protect worker health and safety. The award is a multi-organizational award, not an individual award.

Background

In April 1996, NIOSH and its partners unveiled NORA, a framework to guide occupational safety and health research – not only for NIOSH, but for the entire occupational safety and health community. Approximately 500 organizations and individuals outside NIOSH provided input into the development of NORA. The NORA process, which captured broad input and consensus, produced the following 21 priority areas of research.

NORA Priority Research Areas

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| Disease and Injury | Allergic and Irritant Dermatitis Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Fertility and Pregnancy Abnormalities Hearing Loss Infectious Diseases Low Back Disorders Musculoskeletal Disorders of the Upper Extremities Traumatic Injuries |
| Work Environment and Workforce | Emerging Technologies Indoor Environment Mixed Exposures Organization of Work Special Populations at Risk |
| Research Tools and Approaches | Cancer Research Methods Control Technology and Personal Protective Equipment Exposure Assessment Methods Health Services Research Intervention Effectiveness Research Risk Assessment Methods Social and Economic Consequences of Workplace Illness and Injury Surveillance Research Methods |

Following discussions in 2005 between NIOSH and its partners, NORA entered its second decade with a new sector-based structure to better move research to practice within workplaces. Stakeholder comments were solicited in Town Hall meetings and through the internet. The national agenda will be developed and implemented through NORA Sector Councils. Each Council is in the process of drafting a strategic plan and implementation plan that will define high priority needs within the sector and the types of research and translation activities needed to meet those needs. The draft strategic plans will be available for public comment early in 2008. Visit the [NORA website \(www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora\)](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora) for more information, including a searchable database of [NORA stakeholder comments](#) and descriptions of the priorities being considered by each [NORA Sector Council](#).

Nomination Guidelines

Nominations are invited for collaborative research achievements that have advanced prevention, protection, and intervention in occupational safety and health. Partners should nominate themselves jointly and must comprise three or more organizations. The partnership must include at least one employer or organization representing employers, e.g., trade associations, and at least one organization representing workers. The worker organization should be involved in the decision-making aspects of the study. Other partners may include such entities as academic institutions, government agencies, and non-profit organizations. Individuals with knowledge of a partnership that should be considered for this award are invited to send contact information to the Chair, Partnering Award Subcommittee (Denny Dobbins, <rddobbin@worldnet.att.net>) so the nomination can be solicited. NIOSH participation in or NIOSH funding of the partnership is not a requirement for eligibility.

Nominations are to be submitted via a nomination letter, of no more than four pages, that addresses the following elements:

1. The name of the project and partners
2. A description of the research project, including the nature and significance of the problem being addressed, research procedures, and findings
3. Explanation of how the research findings were translated into action(s) to improve worker health and safety
4. The extent of increased protection against work-related illness or injury resulting from the research partnership, measured by reduced occurrence or severity of injuries, illnesses, disability, or hazardous exposures, etc.
5. The nature of the partnership and involvement by its members (please include background on how the partnership developed and roles of the different partners)

Documentation of the partnership project other than the nomination letter **will not** be considered and should not be included with the nomination letter. For the purpose of this award, research may involve the development of new equipment, practices, products, procedures, or policies to better protect worker health and safety. Routine operational or field surveys, anecdotal observations or normal administrative improvements would not constitute research. The nomination letter **must** include email and other contact information for all the partners.

The Award

The NORA Liaison Committee will select the award recipients. This committee, chaired by Dr. Bonnie Rogers, represents industry, labor, academia, professional organizations, and government. The Liaison Committee's role is to provide outreach and commentary on the development, progress, and direction of NORA implementation.

Each partner of the group winning the award will receive an engraved plaque honoring their selection for ***The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Partnering Award for Worker Health and Safety***. This award presentation will be one of the highlights of the sixth biannual NORA Symposium to be held in Denver, CO, on July 29, 2008. Additionally, a letter will be mailed to the head of each organization receiving the award notifying them of the award and the location of the presentation. NIOSH will attempt to have notification of the award provided to the appropriate local and professional news media.

Previous Winners

The first recipient of ***The NORA Partnering Award for Worker Health and Safety***, presented in 1999, was the Asphalt Partnership. This partnership included manufacturers, employer organizations, labor groups, and the federal government in a collaboration that resulted in reduced worker exposures to hot-mix asphalt fumes by as much as 80%, in significantly less time and at substantially less cost than traditional regulatory approaches. This outcome was achieved through the combination of laboratory method development to measure asphalt emission, engineering redesign, laboratory and field testing of prototype controls, emissions control documentation, and cost savings documentation. This research resulted in the redesign of highway-class, hot-mix asphalt paving machines to incorporate practical new controls that significantly reduce worker exposure to asphalt fumes.

For 2001, the winning partnership project was titled, "A Strategic Plan for Reducing Occupational Dermatitis in Oregon." This project was initiated by the Oregon State Department of Human Services, Health Division following pilot projects demonstrating significant underreporting of occupational dermatitis based on analysis of lost-worktime only claims. Through a public-private partnership that started with active participation of worker compensation carriers to permit better disease tracking for targeted prevention efforts, the project identified plant-induced dermatitis in the agriculture and forestry industry and latex glove-related dermatitis in non-healthcare workers. Based on this information, broad coalitions were built to put data to use for prevention. In addition to the Oregon State Department of Human Services, partners in this award included the Liberty Mutual Northwest Insurance Company, Columbia Helicopters, Inc., The Oregon Restaurant Association, the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 555, and Enviroderm Pharmaceuticals, Inc. The efforts of this partnership have resulted in significant declines in the incidence of medical claims for occupational dermatitis in logging, and in the elimination of the use of latex gloves in many restaurants.

Due to the high quality of nominations received for the 2001 Partnering Award, the Liaison Committee voted to award Honorable Mention for one of the partnership projects, "Crab Related Respiratory Illness in Dutch Harbor, Alaska." Partners involved in this investigation of respiratory

illness in crab processing workers included UniSea management, UniSea workers, and NIOSH.

The partnership project titled “[Employee Back Injuries Prevention in Nursing Homes](#)” received the 2003 award. This partnership of a healthcare employer, employees, universities, manufacturers of lifting devices, and the federal government reduced injuries, back injuries, and workers’ compensation expenses by 61%, 57%, and 37%, respectively, in project facilities. This research identified and evaluated the effectiveness of measures to reduce possible causes of injury of nursing assistants when lifting and moving residents.

Two awards were given in 2006. One project was titled “[Slip, Trip and Fall \(STF\) Prevention in Health Care Workers](#).” This was a collaborative effort between private and public sector U.S. hospitals, organized labor, private and public sector health and safety researchers, and international researchers with cooperation from manufacturers of footwear, flooring and floor wax, to research, develop and test a program that would help to prevent STF injuries among health care workers. Through historical analyses of incidence surveillance, telephone interviews of injured workers, lab studies evaluating flooring and shoes and a range of contaminants, and field studies in select hospitals, the group was able to establish a “best practices” injury prevention program. One of the main partners in the project reported an estimated 25 percent reduction in workers’ compensation costs attributed to same-level STF incidents after implementation of the prevention program.

Another award-winning project in 2006 was titled “[Collaborative Partnerships and Projects of the NIOSH Hazardous Drugs Working Group](#).” This group consisted of representatives from government, labor, pharmacy, nursing, academia, research, pharmaceutical and safety equipment manufacturing, and trade associations. The products and impacts of this collaboration include: a NIOSH Alert summarizing known health risks and guidelines for safe handling and administration of hazardous drugs; in partnership with the FDA, an update of the safe handling warning on the FDA package inserts for antineoplastic drugs; several NIOSH Workplace Solution documents in development on safe handling of hazardous drugs; and a document in collaboration with NIH *Surface Contamination of Chemotherapy Drug Vials and Evaluation of New Vial-Cleaning Techniques: Results of Three Studies*. This partnership nurtured a comprehensive culture of safety in healthcare that protects both patients and the caregivers who treat them.

Submission Instructions

Nominations must be submitted electronically to the NORA Coordinator noracoordinator@cdc.gov.

Criteria and Scoring

Criteria and scoring of the submitted proposals will be based on the following:

1. Extent of the partnership as described in the nomination letter. A minimum of three partners must be involved, and this must include employer and worker representation. Other partners may involve local or federal health organizations, insurance companies, professional associations, trade associations, producers, users, academia, community organizations, equipment manufacturers, etc. (30%)
2. Nature and importance of the outcome, significance of the problem addressed (30%)

3. Quality of the research performed (20%)
4. Utilization or implementation plans or accomplishments to achieve improvement in worker health/safety or hazard reduction (20%)

Deadline

The deadline for receipt of nominations is Wednesday, April 30, 2008. Submissions received after the close of business on April 30 will not be considered.

Additional Information

For additional information, please:

- Contact Denny Dobbin, Chair, Partnering Award Subcommittee at 919-968-6073 or <rddobbin@worldnet.att.net>
- Contact Sid Soderholm, Executive Secretary, NORA Liaison Committee, at <SSoderholm@cdc.gov> or 202-245-0665.
- Or visit the NIOSH Website at <<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>>